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Klan Hall Fire Sentences Eased

RALEIGH, N. C. (AP) —
Five Negro youths sentenced to
12 years in prison for setting
fire to an empty Ku Klux Klan
meeting hall received suspended
sentences yesterday by order of
Gov. Bob Scott.

Damage to the hall was es-
timated at \$100.

The building in Benson was
set afire a week after the assas-
sination of civil rights leader
Martin Luther King Jr. in April,
1968, and after Klansmen brand-
ishing firearms had driven
through a Negro section of the
eastern North Carolina city.

The sentences imposed by
Superior Court Judge William
Bickett brought strong protests
from many individuals and
groups across the state. The
judge was quoted in June as
saying, "I don't mind admitting
I might have made a bad judg-
ment, a mistake.